since 1999-2000 in major crops has been a matter of concern. However, the declining trend was significantly reversed in 2004-05. The thrust of agriculture policy continues to be on schemes and programmes designed to raise production and productivity in agriculture through transfer of improved technology based on field demonstrations, training of farmers, supply of quality inputs, improvement in irrigation facilities, pest control measures etc. The Centrally Sponsored Scheme, namely, Macro Management, was evolved by integrating 27 schemes. Under this scheme, which is designed to supplement/complement efforts put in by States, there is flexibility to develop and pursue activities through Work Plans based on regional priorities. The approved pattern of assistance under the scheme is in the ratio of 90:10 for the Centre and States except in the case on North-Eastern States, who are given 100 per cent. Central assistance. Subsidy is available for various components like seeds, implements, etc. Subject to the limit that the amount of subsidy per farmer or per activity should not exceed 25 per cent. of the cost, or the present subsidy level, which ever is lower.

Promoting inland fisheries in Tamil Nadu

2058. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a vast scope to promote inland fisheries in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard during the last two years; and

(c) the Central assistance sanctioned to the State for the purpose during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government of India is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Development of inland Fisheries and Aquaculture. The scheme is having six components, namely, development of freshwater aquaculture, development of brackish water aquaculture, development of cold water fisheries, development of waterlogged areas, productive utilization of saline/alkaline soils for aquaculture and inland capture fisheries (reservoirs/rivers etc.). The above scheme is being implemented by the State/UT Governments. Under the scheme, expenditure on

developmental activities is shared on 75:25 basis between the Government of India and the State/UT Governments.

(c) During the last two years, no Central assistance has been sanctioned to the State Government of Tamil Nadu under the above scheme as they are having an unspent balance of Rs. 25.42 lakhs released to them during the year 2002-03.

MSP for Millet

†2059. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to increase the support price of millet;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government have given instruction to Food Corporation of India with regard to direct purchase of millet from farmers at the said support price; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) The Government has announced the Price Policy for Kharif Crops of 2005-06 Season including millets, on 20th April, 2005. Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for millets namely Bajra and Jowar have been fixed at Rs. 525 per quintal each compared to Rs. 515 per quintal each fixed for 2004-05 season.

(b) and (c) Procurement of coarse grains including Bajra and Jowar, from farmers under price support operations is presently being entirely undertaken by the State Governments and their Agencies.

Demand and supply of fodder

2060. DR. M. A. M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a huge gap between demand and supply of fodder in the country;

(b) if so, the present demand and supply of fodder in the country; State-wise;

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.